



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

MP

| APPLICATION NO.   | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/645,202  | 08/21/2003  | Paul C. McAfee       | 04-005-US1          | 7244             |
| 57004   | 7590        | 03/30/2007           | EXAMINER            |                  |
| CARR LLP (IST)<br>670 FOUNDERS SQUARE<br>900 JACKSON STREET<br>DALLAS, TX 75202 |             |                      | SHAFFER, RICHARD R  |                  |
|   |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
|   |             |                      | 3733                |                  |

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE  | DELIVERY MODE |
|--|------------|---------------|
| 3 MONTHS                               | 03/30/2007 | PAPER         |

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

|                              |                    |                 |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Office Action Summary</b> | Application No.    | Applicant(s)    |
|                              | 10/645,202         | MCAFEE, PAUL C. |
|                              | Examiner           | Art Unit        |
|                              | Richard R. Shaffer | 3733            |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 January 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                            2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10,12-17 and 19-24 is/are pending in the application.
  - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7,8 and 15-17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-6,9,10,12-14 and 19-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 11 January 2007 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.                                     |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/11/2007</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
|  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.                         |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The amendment to the claims filed on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007 is acknowledged and accepted by the examiner. The previous rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph of claims 10, 12 and 13 is hereby withdrawn.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-6, 9, 10, 12-14 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Claims 1 and 24 recite the new limitation of "substantially rigid." Such language is not previously supported by the specification or claims as originally filed.

### ***Drawings***

The drawings are objected to because applicant has submitted drawings without any reference characters. It is important that applicant clearly labels what is discussed in the specification in regard to the drawings. If applicant does not have reference characters already, applicant should amend the specification to include new reference characters in order to fully describe his invention. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid

abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

#### ***Claim Objections***

Claim 5 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 5 recites that the external layer is metal, however, in claim 1, the limitation is already found.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-6, 9, 10, 12-14 and 19-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Martin (US Patent 5,672,175).

Martin discloses at least two bone anchors (screws **61** and hooks **71** are used); hooks are rigidly attached to an outer sleeve layer (**10**) made of polyethylene (**Column 10, Lines 1-8**); an inner bearing layer (**8**) made of metal is found within the outer sleeve (**10**); a rod (**4a**) slides within the two layered sleeve; a bumper (springs **23**) are found between adjacent sleeves (**8 and 10**); the bumper is adjacent a sleeve during extension and spaced from another during flexion (all the “bumpers” are spaced from at least one sleeve due to intermediate components); means for rigid fixation (**20**) fix the rod in one location; and a transverse connector (**65** connecting plates **55** together).

Martin fails to disclose the internal sleeve layer being made of UHMWPE and the external sleeve layer being made of one of the group consisting of stainless steel, stainless steel alloys, cobalt chrome, cobalt chrome alloys, titanium and titanium alloys. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the inner bearing layer UHMWPE and the outer layer a metal from the group claimed since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416. In the instant case, Martin already disclosed the importance of having appropriate materials to bear

against one another, merely swapping which is plastic and which is metal and choosing an appropriate biomaterial is not inventive.

***Specification***

Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it contains legal phraseology such as "said" in line 4. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

The specification is also objected to for failing to fully describe the drawings with the lack of reference character. See the previous objection of the drawings for guidance in correcting this deficiency.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

Applicant's submission of an information disclosure statement under 37 CFR 1.97(c) with the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(p) on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007 prompted the new

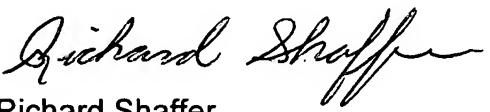
ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 609.04(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard R. Shaffer whose telephone number is 571-272-8683. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (7am-5pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
Richard Shaffer  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007

  
EDUARDO C. ROBERT  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER